on cigarette industry to enhance cigarette exports.

Compulsory usage of Jute Bags

*377. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is widespread violation of laws regarding compulsory usage of jute bags by cement units in the country; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard and action, if any, taken against any such units?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) and (b) The provisions of Jute Packaging Materials Act, 1987 (JPMA) were not implemented for Cement Industry till April, 1996 as the matter was pending before the Supreme Court. Subsequently, several representations have been made to the Standing Advisory Committee appointed under the Act in Ministry of Textiles, regarding unsuitability of jute packaging for cement, because of hygroscopic nature of the commodity, loss on account of seepage and because of health hazards to the workers, etc. The Standing Advisory Committee has since made its recommendations which are under consideration of the Government.

New National Housing Policy

*378. SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:

Will the Minister of URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have lately evolved a new National Housing Policy;

(b) if so, the main features thereof; and

(c) the steps being taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF URBAN AFFAIRS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI RAM JETHMALANI): (a) and (b) A new National Housing and Habitat Policy is under consideration of the Government. The Policy is yet to be finalised and approved by the Government.

(c) The policy can be implemented only after it is approved.

Instrumentation Limited, Palghat

*379. SHRI O. RAJAGOPAL: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has received any representation from the employees of Instrumentation Limited, Palghat (Kerala) that the Palghat Unit should be made into an autonomous unit as the tagging of this unit with the loss making Kota Unit, works against the interests of the employees of Palghat Unit; and

(b) if so, what steps are being taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI SIKANDER BAKHT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Revival Plan formulated by Instrumentation Limited envisages that the Palghat unit would be converted into a joint venture company. Final decision would be taken by BIFR which is a quasi-judicial body.

Jobs for Disabled and Handicapped

*380. MISS SAROJ KHAPARDE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of disabled and handicapped persons has risen in absolute terms in the country while those getting jobs has been going down;

(b) if so, the details thereof with particular reference to Maharashtra; and

(c) what action Government have taken or propose to take to increase the job opportunities for the disabled to the satisfactory level within a time frame?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) No such statistical information is available.

(b) The information has been called for from the Government of Maharashtra.

(c) The Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights & Full Participation) Act enjoins three per cent reservation for disabled persons in ail Government establishments. Under Central Sponsored Scheme 50 Special Employment Exchanges and 39 Special Cells have been set up to exclusively to help persons with disabilities in getting gainful employment. The National Handicapped Finance & Development Corporation has been recently set up to provide soft loans to persons with disabilities for self-employment ventures.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

एस॰ई॰सी॰एल॰ और एम॰सी॰एल॰ से उच्च ग्रेड के कोयले का अवैध परिवहन

2749. **श्री दिलीप सिंह जूदेव:** क्या कोयला मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) वर्ष 1996-97 और 1997-98 के दौरान एस॰ई॰सी॰एल॰ और एम॰सी॰एल॰ में बिक्री किए जाने वाले कोयले के निर्धारित ग्रेड के बदले उच्च ग्रेड के कोयले के अवैध परिवहन के कितने मामले सामने आए;

(ख) इन मामलों में दोनों कंपनियों के दोषी पाए गए अधिकारियों व कर्मचारियों का ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) उनके विरुद्ध की गई कार्रवाई का ब्यौरा क्या है; और

(घ) ऐसे मामलों को रोकने के लिए की गई कार्यवाही का ब्यौरा क्या है?

कोयला मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री दिलीप राय): (क) कोल इंडिया लि॰ (को॰ई॰लि॰) से प्राप्त सूचना के अनुसार सा॰ई॰को॰लि॰ में 1997-98 के दौरान उच्च ग्रेड के कोयले के अवैध परिवहन का एक मामला सामने आया है।

(ख) और (ग) इन मामलों में दोषी पाये गए एक वरिष्ठ बिक्री अधिकारी तथा एक सुरक्षा गार्ड को आरोप पत्र जारी किया गया और उन्हें निलंबित कर दिया गया।

(घ) को॰ई॰लि॰ ने सूचित किया है कि इस प्रकार की घटनाओं को रोकने के लिए निम्नलिखित कदम उठाए गए हैं:—

(i) सभी जांच चौकी/नाकों पर विभागीय सुरक्षा कर्मियों को तैनात किया गया है।

(ii) ट्रकों के आवागमन को विनियमित करने के लिए लदान स्थलों पर सुरक्षा कर्मियों को तैनात कर दिया गया है।

(iii) वे-ब्रिजों, लदान स्थलों तथा नाकों पर समय-समय पर अचानक निरीक्षण किया जाता है।

Coal Mines under Western Coalfields Limited

2750. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Western Coalfields Limited plans to close down some of the mines and also propose to open new coal mines at new sites;

(b) if so, the details of coal mines likely to be closed down and the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of coal mines which will be opened at new sites, the likely expenditure to be incurred on opening the said coal mines; and

(d) the profit/losses incurred by Western Coalfields Limited during the past three Years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI DILIP RAY): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Western Coalfields Limited (WCL) plans to close down three underground coal mines of Pench Area in